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Otto vs. the Arabs

At the outset of *ROSEBUD*, it appears as though director Otto Preminger is presiding over a conventional international thriller with a terrorist twist. A band of Arabs, representing the Palestinian Black September movement, hijacks a yacht carrying five young ladies, four of whom are the daughters of zillionaires, and spirits them off to a cleverly concealed Corsican hideaway. Peter O'Toole, in the role of a CIA agent with a cover as a NEWSWEEK correspondent, is dispatched to rescue them. This sounds like scary stuff, with the added appe-

interplay between the terrorists and their prey. The narrative, gracelessly told in stitched-together scenes that never build, climaxes coolly with a bow to technology and a pandering to Zionist fantasies. The hideout of the Black September campaign is located, not by O'Toole's sleuthing, but by miraculously prescient Israeli computers. The terrorists are captured through an ingenious Israeli gambit that feeds knockout gas through water pipes. And the great terrorist chief himself turns out to be a dotty Richard Attenborough in Moslem drag.

In a final, stem-winding oration that recalls the righteous rhetoric of '40s anti-Nazi movies, Cliff Gorman, as a chipper Israeli intelligence man, tells the captured Attenborough that only a handful of violent desperadoes blocks the road to world peace. What began as a thriller ends as a fairy tale.

—PAUL D. ZIMMERMAN



Lindsay: From real mayor to Hollywood senator

tizer of five nubile damsels in distress.

But nothing harrowing happens. The girls are in no immediate danger, despite scenes of hand-wringing by their parents, among them a blond and bland new actor named John Lindsay, who was more convincing as mayor of New York City than as a senator for Preminger. O'Toole contributes to the relaxed atmosphere by walking through his part in debonair imitation of Rex Harrison. And his tracking of the terrorists leads him down more needlessly blind alleys than a bushman in Brooklyn.

The movie needs exciting "French Connection"-type logistics, because Preminger and his son, Erik, who adapted the French best seller, haven't the slightest interest in character relationships, including the potentially gripping

SOCY.01.4 Rosebud